

The Bel Aire Breeze

Attraction is part of Caban shopping and tourist development

By Matt Heilman

If the funding is obtained like developers believe it should, major development is on the way for the City of Bel Aire. The city has had

a long-term goal of developing an identifiable downtown district, built around City Hall near 53rd North and Rock Road.

Those plans call for development of retail and entertainment options on 580 acres along Rock Road from K-254 to 53rd North. The name of the planned retail and entertainment destination is Caban Marketplace.

The plans for the district came

about when the City of Bel Aire began working with Shopping Center Development and Consulting LLC about two years ago.

Bel Aire City Manager Ty Lasher said the current City Hall was built in 2005 in anticipation of Bel Aire creating its own downtown. He said the city saw the vision about four years ago and

See AQUARIUM, Page 2



An artist's drawing of what the tentatively named Kansas Aquarium would look like from the outside.

Up and running



Photos by Matt Heilman

Century Manufacturing employee Greg Westlake sculpts a mold to be cast into an acrylic piece of promotional material.

Century Manufacturing launches Bel Aire plant

By Matt Heilman

The first piece is in place for the City of Bel Aire. A longtime Wichita-area company has moved to the city as the first tenant to tap into its potential to spur economic growth for northeast Sedgwick County.

Century Manufacturing has started operating in its new 36,000-square-foot facility in Bel Aire's Sunflower Commerce Park, the name given to the city's 800-acre industrial park land running along 53rd North from Webb to Greenwich Roads.

Century Manufacturing President Garry Kemnitz said the 30 employees at the site are still getting settled, but are working well in the new facility. Century Manufacturing was able to move into the

Sunflower Commerce Park about five months after they committed to build on the sight. The City of Bel Aire worked closely with the long-standing company to make the move as seamless as possible, Kemnitz said.

In preparation for Century Manufacturing, Bel Aire issued \$2.08 in industrial revenue bonds for construction. The issuance of the bonds involves a 10-year property tax abatement, an incentive that will be offered to each subsequent tenant expected to follow Century Manufacturing in the Sunflower Commerce Park.

"It's been unbelievable, the assistance and help that we got from the City of Bel Aire," Kemnitz said.

Century Manufacturing, a company that has called the

Wichita area home for about 50 years specializes in making acrylic and transparent plastic promotional materials. The business operated near K-96 and Webb Road for 17 years before its recent move a few miles north and west to Bel Aire.

Century Manufacturing CEO and founder Jim Laubach said the move was necessary for the business to cut down on its overhead as it looks to expand its workforce. Kemnitz said Century Manufacturing is hoping to bring on three to five employees in the next year.

He said the business is recovering from the economic downturn that hit several industries in 2008. About half of Century Manufacturing's

See CENTURY, Page 5



This acrylic, plastic toilet seat is an example of Century Manufacturing's versatility to create a wide variety of products.



Among Century's recent projects was the creation of this year's NBA All-Star game MVP trophy.



To showcase its flexibility, Century also has a beer tap division.



This award is one example of a finished product Century creates for the financial industry.



Matt Heilman

Volunteers package food at the Kansas Coliseum complex Feb. 16.

Volunteers set record with food packaging

By Matt Heilman

More than 2,000 volunteers made history. They gathered at tables throughout one of the spacious pavilions at the Kansas Coliseum complex to impact the lives of people they've never met. In the process, they broke a world record.

Volunteers donned hairnets and rubber gloves and were accompanied by large volumes of food ready to be packaged. On Feb. 16, the group packaged 479,034 meals in one hour, shattering the previous world record of about 350,000 meals packaged in an hour.

The event, put on by local non-profit organizations, was called, "Serving the Hungry at Home and in Haiti."

From noon to 1 p.m., the volunteers frantically packaged meals that consisted of rice, soy beans and vitamin packs. At each table, groups worked in assembly lines, not taking a break until the hour was finished.

The 479,034 meals are enough to feed 800 Haitian school children for more than a year, organizers said. A representative with the Guinness Book of World Records made the record official.

Dick Morris, representing El Dorado-based Numana, which spearheaded the event, said his organization has shipped food "all over the world" in its three-year existence and was starting a program to feed more children in the United States.

"The people of Wichita and this surrounding area have been wonderful for Numana," Morris said.

So far, he said Numana has packaged 26

See NUMANA, Page 4

Council to see new faces after election

By Matt Heilman

In Bel Aire, the city's leadership will have a new look after the April 2 election. Eight candidates are vying for four spots on the council. Mayor Harold Smith and council member Gary Breault are stepping down.

Barring voters' preference for a write-in candidate, current council member David Austin will be the city's next mayor. One of the eight candidates will also fill the unfilled

term limit of Moe Terrebonne. Terrebonne stepped down from the council in November when he announced plans to move to Florida in retirement.

Bel Aire City Clerk Vicki said the candidate who receives the fourth highest number of votes in the April 2 election will fill in to finish Terrebonne's term that expires in 2015.

The top three vote-getters will earn full, four-year terms. Ken Lee is the only current council member guaranteed to retain his seat in

April when the five-person council will welcome at least three new members. Lee was appointed to the council in September to fill the seat vacated by Dave Sly whose career with Boeing moved him and his family to Oklahoma City last fall.

Current council member Peggy O'Donnell is the lone incumbent filed to run in the April 2 election. O'Donnell, a teacher and administrator at Bel Aire's Sunrise Christian Academy, said she wants to stay on the council to see through plans

for development the city has been working on over the last two years. O'Donnell is seeking her third four-year term on the council. There is no term limit for council members in the city.

"I really want to finish it out," she said of the city's progress in the last couple of years. "I want to see some more of this land sold."

Challengers include retired owner/operator of a trucking company and Bel Aire Tree Board Chairman Guy MacDonald, retired resident

Carolyn Smith, court reporting firm owner Shelly Smith, semi-retired political science instructor Dr. Ramona Becker, public relations and marketing professional Jeanette Clement, former City of Bel Aire utility clerk Betty Martine and social work supervisor Andrew Uhl Schmidt.

MacDonald said he wants to serve Bel Aire on the council to make sure the city stays fiscally re-

See ELECTION, Page 4

Disturbing trip down Memory Lane

Once upon a time, a small boy no older than 4 sat in front of the TV in the small living room of his parents’ humble south Wichita home and gazed in bewilderment at one of the strangest, most disturbing, yet fascinating movies ever released.

Since I was introduced to the movie “Labyrinth” more than 20 years ago, I’ve re-watched the movie a handful of times. And each time I’ve seen it, I’ve had the same feeling I had when I first saw it as a small child.

I find it disturbing that



Heil on life

By Matt Heilman

David Bowie’s role as Jareth the Goblin King somehow required him to wear tights that would make Peter Pan blush. I think it’s twisted that this androgynous pop singer-turned actor seems to fit so naturally in a role that required him to cake on makeup and kidnap

a baby to take with him to his castle in a magical world occupied by the most demented Muppet-like creatures the brilliant mind of Jim Henson could imagine.

It’s uncomfortable when he tosses a baby boy in the air and slow dances with and sings falsetto to a teenage Jennifer Connelly. It’s unsettling when a band of lanky, orange creatures dance and party by taking off their heads while singing with Rastafarian accents.

With all that said, I have two older sisters who love the movie, “Labyrinth.” And I’ll

admit, over the years, I’ve also grown to appreciate the bizarre story as one of my childhood favorites.

Last month, “Labyrinth” played at the Palace in west Wichita. It provided a great opportunity for my sisters, brother-in-law and me to relive our childhood. So, we spent \$3.50 on tickets and sat in wide wonder at the spectacle in high definition on a large screen.

It had been about five years since my last “Labyrinth” viewing and it was extra disturbing in the theater. Jareth

the Goblin King is creepier when he stands more than 20 feet tall.

The Muppet-like goblins he associates with are entertaining, but the master they serve will make you want to lock all of your doors and windows.

It was a nice trip down Memory Lane, even though it was guided by a freakish child abductor and his band of Sesame Street rejects.

Matt Heilman is a reporter for The Bel Aire Breeze. Reach him at 755-0821 or matt@arkvalleynews.com.

CHURCH HIGHLIGHTS

Christ Lutheran Church

There are three different types of services every Sunday. At 8:30 a.m., there is a Contemporary Service; at 9:45 a.m., a Kid Friendly Service as well as Sunday School for all ages; and at 11:00 a.m., a Traditional Lutheran Service. Communion is offered at every service every Sunday.

A variety of weekly and monthly activities are offered including Falcon Fellowship (Free lunch for students at Heights High School on the 2nd Wednesday of the month), Youth groups, Quilting, Choirs, and Men’s Breakfast.

Find the church online at www.christ-lutheran.org; e-mail office@clc.kscoxmail.com. Pastor Chad’s email is pastor@clc.kscoxmail.com. Call the office at 744-1242.

The church is located at 5356 N. Hillside (at 53rd and N. Hillside, across from Wichita Heights HS)

Church of the Resurrection

Church of the Resurrection (Roman Catholic) is located at 4910 N. Woodlawn in Bel Aire.

Masses for the Lord’s Day are 5:30 p.m. Saturday and 8:30 and 11 a.m. Sunday.

Weekday Masses are 8 a.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday; also at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday.

Resurrection Catholic School has students from preschool through eighth grade.

The parish/school website is www.resurrectionwichita.com. Phone number is 744-2776. Rev. James F. Weldon is the pastor.

Community Bible Chapel

The church is located at 4551 Auburn, south of 45th North between Oliver and Woodlawn, in Bel Aire.

Worship service and breaking of the bread are at 9 a.m., with Bible study and Sunday school at 10:30 on Sundays.

Wednesday prayer and Bible study are at 7 p.m.

For more information, call Melvan Adair at 744-7091.

Fairmount United Church of Christ

The church welcomes a new minister, Rev. Larry Young.

Visit the newly renovated building at 1605 Fairmount in Wichita (one block south and one block east of Hillside and 17th North).

Sunday worship is at 10:30

a.m. which includes children’s church. Sunday school begins at 9:30.

For more information, call 682-1597 or visit at www.fairmountucc.org.

Gospel Assembly Church

Located at 4230 N. Oliver in Bel Aire, service times are 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Sunday. Bible study is 7 p.m. Monday. Prayer service is 7 p.m. Tuesday. Praise and worship is 7 p.m. Wednesday.

Phone number is 744-1502. Rev. Gary D. Green is the pastor.

Greenwich United Methodist Church

Sunday worship service at 9 a.m. Fellowship and coffee follow the service.

Pastor Jeff Miller can be reached at 744-0203.

Senior Day first Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m.

United Methodist Women meet the first Thursday of each month at 1 p.m.

Movie night is the second Saturday of each month at 6:30 p.m. A snack is served.

The church is located about a mile south of K-254 on Greenwich Road. The phone number is 744-0203.

Kechi United Methodist Church

Kechi United Methodist Church is located at 4533 E. 61st North. The phone number is 744-1221.

Rev. Guy E. Rendoff is the pastor. Website is www.kechiumc.org; Email is kechiumc@sbcglobal.net

Worship services on Sunday morning are at 9:03 and 11 a.m. with Sunday school at 10 a.m. During both worship services, children’s church and a nursery are offered.

The A.I.M. Class (Adults in Ministry) will begin a new Advent Bible study on Dec. 2. The class meets in the parlor at 10 a.m. Newcomers are always welcome.

Pine Valley Christian Church

The church is located at 5620 E. 21st North. Sunday school is at 9 a.m. with worship at 10:15. For more information call 685-2421.

Risen Savior Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod

Contemporary Sunday worship services at 8 and 10:30 a.m. Communion on the first and third Sunday. Adult Sunday school and Bible class meet at 9:15 a.m. Children’s church at

10:30. A nursery is provided during Bible class and second service. Wednesday evening ministries are 6:30-8 p.m.

Our preschool is now open. Enrollment continues for our Monday/Wednesday/Friday Preschool class currently in session for 3- to 5-year-olds from 9-11:45 a.m. Please call the church office for details.

The church is located at 6770 E. 34th North in Wichita. The phone number is 683-5538. www.risensavior.net.

Senior pastor is Tom Harmon.

Associate pastor is Ron Gloe.

University United Methodist Church

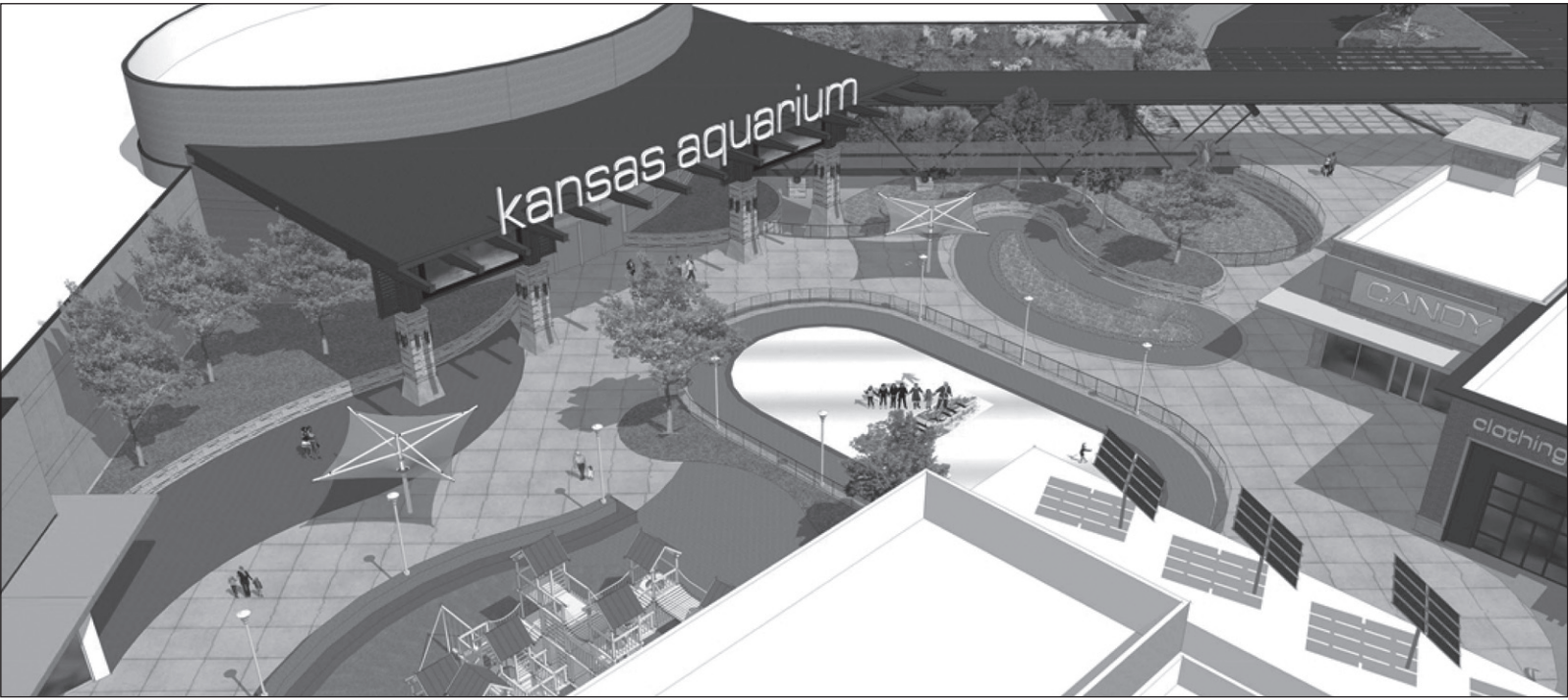
The church is located across from the Wichita State University campus at 21st and Yale.

Sunday activities include adult and youth educational classes at 9:15 a.m., traditional service at 10:30 and youth group activities from 4 to 6 p.m.

E-mail uumc2220@uumc.net; phone 686-6765. Rev. Charles Claycomb is the pastor.

Send your church’s upcoming events and service times to legals@arkvalleynews.com or call 755-0821.

An artist’s drawing of the Kansas Aquarium. Outside of the attraction in Bel Aire would be children’s play area plus a skating rink.



Aquarium

Continued from Page 1

is nearing a point to make the vision a reality.

“Originally, our whole goal was to get a downtown and Shopping Center Development started working with us,” Lasher said. “They took our vision and actually ran with it.”

On Feb. 13, Shopping Center Development and Consulting’s Tom Blitz unveiled plans for a \$50 million, 501 (3) C, non-profit private/public project for Caban Marketplace to join a water park and resort destination and large sports complex that has previously been proposed.

The proposed project is a state-of-the art aquarium, tentatively called the Kansas Aquarium.

Once constructed, Blitz said the facility would include a 300,000 gallon main exhibit with five smaller satellite exhibits of 60,000 gallons accompanied by multiple smaller exhibits “for interactive and educational purposes.”

The 100,000-square-foot aquarium would include multiple meeting and banquet areas along with a restaurant and gift shop and would be located in the heart of the retail portion of

Caban Marketplace next to City Hall, Blitz said.

“With the recent announcement of the 220,000 square-foot sports training academy and almost \$100 million destination resort water park, Shopping Center Development and Consulting wanted to provide the 5 million-plus yearly visitors with something different not currently found in Wichita,” Blitz said.

The development’s ability to draw a large number of visitors from out-of-state is a key component for Caban Marketplace to qualify as a STAR Bond district that can be funded with help from state tax revenue.

On Feb. 13, Blitz and Lasher voiced confidence that Caban Marketplace could be funded with STAR bonds. To cover its cost for infrastructure improvements, the Bel Aire Council approved establishing a Community Improvement District (CID). The CID allows the city to implement up to a 2-percent sales tax in the proposed downtown development, essentially designed to allow Caban Marketplace to pay for its own infrastructure with sales tax revenue going back into the development.

The CID would only include new businesses in the future development. There would not

be a new sales tax on existing Bel Aire businesses.

“This is something that is very exciting for Bel Aire, Sedgwick County and the State of Kansas,” Lasher said. “When the legislature created the STAR bond process, it envisioned projects just like this, because if you drive out there today, it’s all bare ground. And so, everything that’s going to be happening from this day forward is gonna be new development, new jobs, new taxes and new revenue for the city, the county and the state.”

Lasher said developers and the city were working through STAR bond financing and there isn’t a timetable from the Kansas Department of Commerce to make a final decision on whether STAR bonds would be granted for Caban Marketplace.

On Feb. 13, Blitz presented architectural designs for the proposed aquarium, created by Wichita’s Shelden Architecture. His presentation was given at Shelden’s office in downtown Wichita. Lasher and Sedgwick County Commissioner Dave Unruh, whose district includes

Bel Aire, joined Blitz in addressing the media.

“We’re looking forward to the impact Caban Marketplace will have as a sports, retail and entertainment complex in the northeast part of the county,” Unruh said.

“It’s a unique opportunity for us and I just want to congratulate the developers on the progress they’ve made thus far.”

Business progress reason for optimism

We were waiting for something like this to happen.

A handful of unrelated recent business moves have one thing in common: A positive mark as we judge the health of the local economy.

We were pleased to hear the recent announcement of major development plans in Bel Aire as well as other businesses planning to invest in Valley Center and Park City. We hope they’re the tip of the iceberg as we emerge from a long and cold recession.

In Bel Aire, Caban Marketplace is a planned 580-acre retail and entertainment development that is designed to give the city an identifiable downtown. The city is dreaming big with the development that it hopes to finance with the help of state tax revenue through STAR bonds.

Plans for Caban Marketplace include restaurants, a movie theater, shops, a state-of-the-art aquarium, indoor and outdoor sports facilities and a water park and resort destination.

The City of Bel Aire has been working with Shopping Center Development and Consulting LLC to come up with a master plan for the downtown development that, once completed, is to take up a large area along Rock Road from K-254 to 53rd North.

Meanwhile, Casey’s General Store is planning to construct a new convenience store and gas station in the heart of Valley Center, a local chiropractor is getting ready to build a new building on the south side of town, work to transform the former Echo Hills golf course into a retail complex near 53rd North and I-135 is continuing and an area Ditch Witch operation is planning to build a new facility near 77th North and Hydraulic. Apart, each project is significant. Together, however, they have the potential to start a mini revolution of sorts on the county’s north side.

These are the kinds of announcements that were happening with some regularity in north Sedgwick County before the downturn of 2008. It was unfortunate that the pace of commercial, industrial and residential development slowed to a crawl during the past four years. But there are signs of hope.

— The Bel Aire Breeze

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VOTE CAROLYN SMITH FOR CITY COUNCIL

- Experienced Leader
- Long-time observer of Bel Aire City Government
- Part-time business owner


I want the city to:

- Sell land and reduce the debt
- Improve roads as budget permits
- Look for ways to reduce water costs
- Look for an additional source of water
- Keep the Recreation Center open
- Be civil, open and honest

Paid for by Carolyn Smith for Bel Aire City Council - Harold Smith, Treasurer

Diabetes Support


at Newton Medical Center



Join us for a FREE seminar on how to decrease frustrating experiences at the doctor’s office, helping patients to be more assertive, be prepared to ask questions and provide information to get the most out of their visits.

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City of Bel Aire



Bel Aire Recreation

5251 E. 48th North • www.belaireks.gov • 744-2700
Mon., Tue., & Thur. 8-8 • Wed. & Fri. 8-7 • Sat. 9-3
For more information on these or any Bel Aire Recreation Programs call 744-2700.

HELP WANTED

The City of Bel Aire has part-time/summer openings available for youth baseball/softball umpires, lifeguards, and an assistant pool manager. Apply in person at the Bel Aire Recreation Center.

SPRING BREAK SPORTS WEEK (ages 5-14)

Each day will feature a new sport to play such as baseball, flag football, soccer, basketball, or volleyball. Participants will meet March 18 – 21, times TBA. The registration deadline is March 9.

MAXIMIZE BASKETBALL CAMP (ages 6-11)

Bel Aire Recreation has partnered with Brent Atwater, a former collegiate player and coach, to bring you a coed Spring Break basketball camp. Participants will meet March 18-21, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

BLASTBALL

Blastball is an introductory coed T-ball program for four year olds. The registration deadline is March 23.

SHORT SPORTS

This instructional program for three year olds will teach basic sports skills including throwing, catching, kicking, and batting. The registration deadline is April 13.

RECREATIONAL SUMMER BALL LEAGUES

(boys ages 5-11 & girls ages 5-12)
Teams will play up to two games per week

A \$5 late fee will be charged to all sign-ups after the deadline.
For more information on these or any Bel Aire Recreation Programs call 744-2700

Have you seen the Action Line?

Log on to <http://www.egovlink.com/belaire/action.asp> to submit comments and concerns, ask questions or report a problem directly to City staff. We want to hear from you!

Want a Guaranteed Credit at Tax Time?

Get a \$5 Credit just by signing up for E-Billing!

Sign up for E-billing by April 15th and you'll receive a one-time \$5 credit to your utility account. Your utility bill will be emailed to you every month. Sign up for this convenient option today by contacting the Utility Department at **744-2451 ext. 132**

or
utilclerk@belaireks.gov

Enroll for automatic bill pay

Never worry if you paid your utility bill on time again with automated bill payments through the City. Each month on the 5th, your checking account will be automatically debited for your current bill. All you need to do to sign up is fill out the ACH auto payment form available on the City's website, www.belaireks.gov, or come into City Hall to fill out the form and submit a voided check to the Utility Clerk. Simple, easy, and you don't have to worry when the 10th rolls around if you paid the bill or not!

Meet The Candidates

Elections for Mayor and Council Members will be April 2. Come learn more about the candidates at these community forums hosted by the Bel Aire Seniors:
March 18 at 7pm at the Bel Aire Recreation Center
March 26 at 7 pm in the Community Room at City Hall

Bel Aire Seniors

All SENIORS 55+ are cordially invited to all events listed below. The Senior Center and Library area is open from 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. Monday through Friday excluding holidays. The library has a wide selection of library books to check out at no cost nor time restraints, along with computers available for study or research. Remember any senior can belong to or attend more than one senior center/club in Sedgwick County.

Locations:

Senior Center/Community Room – 7651 E. Central Park Ave., 744-2451
Recreation Center – 5251 E. 48th St. N., 744-2700

Weekly Events:

Bel Aire Walkers – M-F, 8-9 a.m. at the Rec Center (indoors & climate controlled)
Free for BA Senior members, alternate times available
Men's Coffee & Fellowship – Mondays, 10 a.m. at the Senior Center
Yoga – Mondays & Wednesdays, 6 p.m. at the Rec Center (monthly fee)
Bridge Games – Tuesdays, 1 p.m. at the Senior Center
Low Impact Aerobics – Wednesdays, 9 a.m. at the Rec Center
Braum's Breakfast – Fridays, 9:00 a.m. on North Rock Road

Monthly & Special Events:

March 1st -3rd , Outdoor Living & Landscape Show, (60+) \$8, Call Vicki or Carolyn if interested
March 4, 6:30 p.m. – Potluck Dinner – John Boldenow, “Antique Appraising”– Community Room
March 5, 8:30 a.m. – Breakfast at IHOP
March 6, 10 a.m. – Volunteer library work time at the Senior Center
March 7, 11 a.m. – Zhanna Pataky, “The Benefits of Acupuncture” at the Senior Center
March 11, 10 a.m. – RS Advisory Meeting at the Rec Center
March 12, 11:30 a.m. – CS Advisory Board Meeting at the Rec Center
March 13, 10 a.m. – Open Sewing at the Senior Center
March 13, 11:30 a.m. – Lunch at Old Mill Tasty Shop (Meet at Senior Center to Carpool)
March 13, 1:30 p.m. – Dr. Jerry Old “Is 60 the New 40?” at the Wichita Public Library Downtown Branch
March 14, 11 a.m. – Valarie Page – Arthritis info and Q and A at the Senior Center
March 19, Ladies Dine Out - for info call Anita at 744-2840
March 20, 10 a.m. – Men's Coffee at Braums
March 20, 10:15 a.m. – Senior Aerobics Brunch (different locations)
March 20, 2 p.m. – Ladies Coffee/Tea at Braums
March 21, 11 a.m. – Home Buddy presentation at the Senior Center
March 25, 6 p.m. – Covered Dish Dinner, Tim Babnich with Tim and his Guitar, Rec Center
March 27, 10:30 a.m. – Open Sewing at the Senior Center
March 27, 7 p.m. – Bunko games at the Senior Center

Community Events

TOPS – Tuesdays, 9 a.m. at the Senior Center
City Council Meetings – 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of every month
March 6th, 12 p.m. – Chamber of Commerce Meeting
March 9th, 11:00 a.m. - Red Hat lunch and visit to Nature Center, call Anita for more info 744-2840
March 11th, – Bel Aire Heights HOA Meeting at the Community Room
March 18th, 7:00 p.m. Meet Your Candidate Night at the Rec Center
March 19th, 4 p.m. – UAC Meeting
March 11th, – Central Park HOA meeting at the Senior Center
March 25th, 7 p.m. – Tree Board Meeting at the Senior Center
March 26th, 7 p.m. – Meet Your Candidate Night at the Community Room
March 28th – 30th – Advanced Voting

Deadline for April
Bel Aire Breeze
Friday, March 15

We want to hear from you!

NLAR plans to operate in former arena this month

By Matt Heilman

The days of Wichita Thunder hockey games, rodeos, concerts and state wrestling tournaments are over. But the former entertainment venue once known as Britt Brown Arena will remain a viable facility in north Sedgwick County.

More than a year after reconstruction began, the space is almost ready to serve its new purpose as a testing facility for the National Institute for Aviation Research.

The testing at the facility will include stress testing and certification of new aircraft as well as recertification of older aircraft, said Wichita developer Johnny Stevens who owns the former Kansas Coliseum property including the Kansas Pavilions and the former arena.

“We hope to be in there by the end of February or the first of March with full occupancy,” NIAR Executive Director John Tomblin said of the former arena space in mid January. “We might be getting some aircraft parts on the floor before then, but we’ll have people in offices and everything by the first of March.”

Initially, Tomblin said



Courtesy photo

Employees work on a wing at the National Institute for Aviation Research’s current facilities in Wichita.

about 80 employees would work at the facility with plans to expand to 100 within the first couple years

of operation. He said the facility has a capacity of 120 employees.

The transformation from

an entertainment venue to an aircraft testing facility involved extensive work, including replacement of

the roof and removal of the stadium seating. The former arena now includes two levels with office space where the stadium seating used to be and the arena cleared to serve as a large aircraft hangar.

“I don’t think there’s any aircraft that can’t fit in there,” Tomblin said.

He said the facility would initially include work for business jet customers and unmanned aircraft customers with a mix of civilian and military work.

“This facility will rival any place in the world for this type of testing,” Tomblin said.

He cited two main reasons why the former home of Britt Brown Arena is ideal for NIAR: It has adequate space and more than enough power.

Tomblin said most warehouses used for aircraft parts testing have 24-to-30-foot ceilings. The former arena has a 50- to 60-foot ceiling, plus about four times the amount of power that’s needed.

The reconstruction included trenching down each side of the former skating rink for hydraulics and air. Tomblin said hydraulic

pistons are needed to move individual parts of airplanes, including the wings and tails. He said excess air is needed to pressurize the fuselage and then “dump all the air out” to simulate going up to maximum altitude and back to the ground.

Another feature of NIAR’s new home is a massive, 500,000-pound machine located where a locker room used to be that will be used for testing tension compression and torque on the components that make up parts of the airplanes.

The facility at the Kansas Coliseum property more than triples the amount of space NIAR currently has at its disposal at its testing site on the Hawker Beechcraft campus in Wichita.

NIAR’s objective is to stay on the cutting edge of aviation research and development, working on new concepts for different customers from around the world. By this spring, several of the top engineers in the aviation industry will be meeting that objective in the old barn just east of 85th North and I-135.

“All their skills are up to date,” Tomblin said.

Election

Continued from Page 1

sponsible as it grows. He said he’s been asked by fellow residents to run for council over the past several years. He said he also wants to make sure the council is able to address needed infrastructure improvements in the city without burdening taxpayers.

“There’s a controlled way to do that,” he said.

Shelly Smith, who has been involved in several community organizations and serves on the Homeowners Association in Central Park, said the council could benefit from new energy, new ideas and new attitudes as it looks to transform into a destination for visitors to the Wichita area.

“I feel Bel Aire is right on the cusp of have a whole new future,” she said.

She said the city needs to make the most out of its assets to overcome its debt and fund needed infrastructure improvements to older parts of the city.

“We’ve got great things available to us, but we’ve got to grow it,” she said.

Uhl Schmidt said he’s enjoyed politics since he was a teenager and believes the council could benefit from having a fresh perspective from a people-oriented professional with a young family.

Clement, an active volunteer with the Junior League, Sedgwick County Zoo, Public Relations Society of America and Young Professionals of Wichita, said the council could benefit from her strong communication skills.

‘Meet Your Candidate Night’ set

The Bel Aire Seniors Club Inc. is again sponsoring a “Meet Your Candidate Night” at 7 p.m. March 18 at the Bel Aire Recreation Center.

All candidates running in the Bel Aire mayoral and city council races have been invited to attend. Each candidate will be given three minutes to state their point of view. A question and answer period will follow.

The public is invited. Moderator for the event will be Sedgwick County Commissioner Dave Unruh.

— The Breeze staff

She said her professional experience gives her a clear understanding of group dynamics and she would serve well with fellow council members as well as representatives with local and state

agencies.

“I hope to bring reasonable, responsible and representative leadership while ensuring the work we accomplish provides sustainable economic growth for Bel

Aire,” she said.

Becker, who has experience serving on Bel Aire’s economic advisory committee, said the city is at a critical point and could benefit from her knowledge of everything that has happened in Bel Aire. Becker has called the Bel Aire home since 1985.

She said the city needs representation that can help the city in its efforts to monitor water rates, overcome its land debt and improve streets.

Politically, Becker has experience on the state level, serving as a speechwriter for former Kansas Gov. Joan Finney from 1991 to 1995.

Martine said she hopes to guide the city in the right direction to sell its vacant land and to begin addressing the reconstruction needed on infrastructure in “Old Bel Aire” while keeping up with improvements on new developments in the city.

Carolyn Smith, the wife of Mayor Harold Smith, said she wanted to run for council for three primary reasons: to help the city continue to sell land and reduce its debt, continue with a city manager that can work well with the business community and to maintain good relations with other cities.

Numana

Continued from Page 1

million meals with help from 157,000 volunteers.

Numana partnered with Volunteer Kansas and the Downtown Rotary Club of Wichita to organize the Feb. 16 world-record event.

“I think Kansans just have big hearts and when we told them there were children who needed to eat, they wanted to do something about it,” said Volunteer Kansas Director Nola

Brown. “Breaking the record was just icing on the cake.”

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Cities prep for effects of drought

By Matt Heilman

The dry conditions aren't as noticeable as when temperatures climb in the summer, but, despite the February snowstorm, south-central Kansas is in a drought.

The cities of Park City and Bel Aire have a partnership that, although rocky at times, has them in good shape to make it through the lack of moisture.

In Park City, the city's primary water source comes from the Chisholm Creek Utility Authority, the water and sewer treatment facility it co-owns with the City of Bel Aire.

With the depth of the CCUA's current wells receding, Park City Administrator Jack Whitson said an agreement signed in November could allow the CCUA to drill a well that would only service Park City's

water customers. In the agreement, Park City, which uses most of the water provided by the CCUA, would pay for the well's construction. Park City also has the ability to tap into Wichita water as a backup plan.

The City of Bel Aire has two exclusive, take-or-pay agreements from the CCUA and the City of Wichita. Currently, Bel Aire receives about 70 percent of its water from Wichita.

While Park City's representation

on the CCUA board has questioned Bel Aire's need to contract with two entities for its water service, Bel Aire City Manager Ty Lasher said having two primary water sources puts the city in better shape than most in the face of a drought.

"We have a drought plan and conservation plan approved every year," Lasher said. "Having two sources really shines in these situations."

In Sedgwick County, a key concern is the drastic drop in the water

level at Cheney Reservoir, where the City of Wichita gets about 60 percent of its water.

"If anybody doesn't think the drought is serious, they need to go out to Cheney Lake or watch the news," Whitson said. "There are marinas out there where the docks are just standing in dirt. If people don't think there's a drought, they are sorely mistaken."

Century

Continued from Page 1

business was in creating awards for banks and financial companies.

The hit to the financial industry required the business to cut its workforce almost in half. Although Century Manufacturing struggled for a few years, the company that is better known nationally than locally had enough of a client base to stay afloat. Notable work from Century Manufacturing has included the creation of the American Music Awards, Country Music video awards and the 2013 NBA All-Star game MVP trophy.

A Bel Aire company manufactured the trophy hoisted by LA Clippers' star guard Chris Paul on Feb. 17 in Houston.

Century Manufacturing also

has a beer tap division, with a client list including several large breweries, Kemnitz said.

While the company is seeing a turn for the better, he said he wants its growth to stay moderate.

"We're kind of retaining ourselves," Kemnitz said. "We're hoping that it doesn't grow too fast. We want to kind of manage the growth and not let it get out of hand."

He said the company generates sales through trade shows and conducts about 75 percent of its business through distribution of a couple of professional associations.

"We don't sell directly to the public," Century Manu-

facturing sales manager Doug Newby said. "It's mainly all through third-party sales."

Newby said the company's new facility is working especially well from an efficiency standpoint, being laid out in an "almost perfect manner" with smooth transitioning from one department to the next. The design team is next to printing, which neighbors the space for molding and casting. After the molds are cast, there's a short walk to the shipping department.

Century Manufacturing also has a partnership with the El Dorado Correctional Facility in which inmates are used for physical labor needed

on several of the company's larger projects.

Newby, a Kechi resident, said he kept up to date with Bel Aire's progress on its industrial park land when Century Manufacturing decided to move.

"We wanted to be close to where we were to keep moving expenses down," he said.

Newby contacted Bel Aire City Manager Ty Lasher and the company moved forward with plans to purchase land on one of about 15 available lots on 155 acres in the first phase of the Sunflower Commerce Park.

He said the commerce

park's location would benefit tenants with its proximity to K-254 and K-96 and the possibility for a railroad spur off the Union Pacific Line that runs through the 800 acres.

"It's a very good place for an industrial park," Newby said.

Laubach, who also owns Wichita's Heartland Coin Gallery, was at a Nov. 5 groundbreaking ceremony to celebrate Century Manufacturing's move to Bel Aire and

the public introduction to the Sunflower Commerce Park. At the ceremony, he thanked the city for catering to his company's plans.

"They have jumped through hoops to get this thing ready to go," Laubach said.

Ramona Becker for Bel Aire City Council



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City OKs work on residential development

By Matt Heilman

In a city that has fought an uphill battle trying to develop its vacant property, the Rock Springs addition offers some welcome relief. The City of Bel Aire does not own the land and isn't the developer. Rock Springs, located near 53rd North and Rock Road, is being developed by Wichita developer Gene Vitarelli. Plans for Rock Springs

call for a mixture of single-family homes and duplexes. Vitarelli's initial proposal for construction on 67 lots was scaled back, but the project has moved forward. Construction has started on homes in Phase I of Rock Springs. At its Feb. 5 meeting, the Bel Aire City Council moved forward with preparing 19 lots in Rock Springs as part of development in Phase II. The council approved pay-

ing, water and sanitary sewer petitions for Phase II and approved a contract with Wichita firm Ruggles and Bohm for engineering work. The measures were approved 3-0-1 with council member Ken Lee abstaining since he works as an engineer for Ruggles & Bohm. Also on the development front, the council approved a real estate purchase agreement extension with Shopping

Center Development Consultants. The 100-day extension was granted because developers have expressed interest in purchasing 12 acres north and west of City Hall to construct an apartment complex. Mayor Harold Smith explained that the residential plan is separate from the downtown development planned as part of Caban Marketplace. However, like the retail and entertainment

development, developers are hoping the apartment complex can be funded with help of state sales tax revenue in the form of STAR Bonds. Also on Feb. 5, the council: •Heard from residents Mike Brown, Catherine Brokaw and Jerry Johnson about concerns with the courtyard home development in the Elk Creek addition. The homeowners expressed their concern that the courtyard homes were going to become rental properties after they had been led to believe the homes would be sold. •Approved an appropriations ordinance of \$254,733.98. •Approved a service provider agreement for mowing of certain city parks with Tree Top Nursery and Landscape and Countryside Lawn and Tree. •Held a 15-minute executive session to discuss matters relating to attorney-client privilege. No binding action was taken in the closed session. •Agreed to have a council workshop at 6:30 p.m. Feb. 12. All four council members and Mayor Harold Smith were present at the Feb. 5 meeting.

Sunrise standout to throw for Hutch

By Matt Heilman

Sunrise Christian Academy senior quarterback Zach Howell is state record holder who has flown under the radar. Sunrise isn't part of the Kansas State High School Activities Association. The small private school in Bel Aire doesn't compete in a league or challenge for state championships. As a result, the school doesn't usually draw much attention. But Howell's game couldn't be ignored. On Feb. 7, the senior signed his letter of intent to play football at Hutchinson Community College, one of the state's best junior college programs in the deep Jayhawk Conference that includes six-time national champion Butler Community College.



Zach Howell's family and coach join him at his signing ceremony Feb. 7.

Howell, who shattered state passing records as a junior and again led the state in passing as a senior, said he felt at home at Hutchinson and was looking forward to competing for a starting spot behind center. "Ultimately, it's a place where I can go and perform

well, compete and go on to the next level," he said. Sunrise coach Trey Hall said he considers Howell the best quarterback in the state regardless of class. Playing for Hall, Howell was part of a transition from 8-man to 11-man football. In his first year playing 11-man, Howell set state records by throwing for 4,208 yards in a season and 627 yards in a single game. He tied a state record by throwing for eight touchdowns in a single game. He followed his standout junior season with a strong senior campaign that included 3,000 more passing yards that led all quarterbacks in Kansas. Hall said Howell excelled

Defensive back signs with Dodge

Jose Holguin became the second Sunrise Christian Academy football player to sign his letter of intent to play at the next level. Holguin, a defensive back for Sunrise, signed to play for Dodge City Community College next fall. Holguin came to Sunrise from the Bahamas. Sunrise coach Trey Hall described Holguin as "a raw talent with a lot of upside." "As long as he will continue to work hard, he will be successful at Dodge City," Hall said.

— The Breeze staff

to get bigger. Any time that he needed to be at weights or camps or whatever, the parental support was there, and his work ethic was there. And when you've got that, culminating with a group that plays together as a team, you get to see a lot of special things happen." Howell said he likely could have gotten more exposure and gone to a public school after middle school, but he benefited from his decision to stick with Sunrise.

DEATH

CAROL A. JOHNSON
A Bel Aire physician who worked as a team doctor for Sunrise Christian Academy died Feb. 4. Dr. Carol A. Johnson was 63. Johnson, who held her doctorate in family medicine, practiced with Family Physicians of Kansas. She is survived by her two sons and five siblings. Sunrise Christian Academy administrator and teacher



Johnson

Peggy O'Donnell said Johnson left a lasting impact on Sunrise and the Bel Aire community. In June, Johnson was the recipient of the 2012 Kansas Academy of Family Physicians Humanitarian Award. In her acceptance speech, Johnson relived her career and opportunities to travel around the world and challenges growing up in a poor family of nine children. At the conclusion of her acceptance speech, Johnson pointed out three things that mattered to her most: •Relationships, not things. •What we do for others, not for ourselves. •What we do for eternity, for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.



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